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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KN](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: CHINESE ACADEMIC VIEWS ON A NORTHEAST ASIA PEACE
AND SECURITY MECHANISM

Classified By: Deputy Political Section Chief Ben Moeling. Reasons 1.4
(b/d).

Summary

1. (C) Many Chinese academics view the eventual establishment of a North East Asia Peace and Security Mechanism (NEAPSM) as a "natural outgrowth" of the Six-Party Talks. While there is no agreement among scholars on what a future NEAPSM will look like, many believe that it will start with the Six Parties and may later expand to include interested countries, such as Mongolia. While one contact cited concern that North Korea could lean towards the United States in a post-nuclear Korean Peninsula environment, another said that China does not find this scenario "scary." An informal survey of Chinese scholars indicates wide support for continued U.S. involvement in Northeast Asia. However, one academic speculated that the United States is not truly committed to establishing NEAPSM and that China should "forget it" because such a security mechanism will be unreliable. End Summary.

NEAPSM Timing

2. (C) Many Chinese academics view the eventual establishment of a North East Asia Peace and Security Mechanism (NEAPSM) as a "natural outgrowth" of the Six-Party Talks, said China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) Professor Li Jun. The establishment of a new regional architecture should be considered only after the resolution of the North Korea nuclear issue, he urged. Secretary General of the Institute of World Development (IWD) Bian Xiaochun noted that while Chinese scholars have discussed the possibility of NEAPSM for some time now, Chinese policymakers only recently have begun to hold discussions on the issue.

3. (C) Separately, University of Shizuoka Professor Hajime Izumi (a Japanese professor who regularly meets with Chinese scholars on DPRK issues) said he believes Japan will need to see "substantial progress" on abductees before Japan is prepared to move forward on NEAPSM.

Looking for a NEAPSM Model

4. (C) China Academy of Social Science scholar Jin Xide said Chinese academics envision three possible models for a future NEAPSM: 1) the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) model; 2) the Shanghai Cooperation Organization model and 3) the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-plus three model. China is of the "realistic view," Jin said, that all kinds of existing models, as well as those without precedent, could work in Asia. There is no need to pick just one, he added. Professor Izumi said he believes the OSCE offers the most appropriate model for Northeast Asia, because of the organization's array of confidence building measures

amongst the parties, which Japan would like to see in Northeast Asia. Separately, Counselor Tang Guocai of the MFA's Policy Planning Department told Poloff that China prioritizes &consensus, noninterference, and respect for sovereignty⁸ in regional architecture institutions, and specifically cited the OSCE and the Organization of American States as models that &probably would not work in Asia now.⁸

15. (C) At first, NEAPSM will likely include the Six Parties and might later include interested countries, such as Mongolia, said CICIR Professor Li. The benefits of NEAPSM over mechanisms already in place, such as ARF, ASEAN and APEC, are that it will cover a different geographic area and incorporate regional "powers." According to IWD's Bian, NEAPSM's format will depend on what "type" of a North Korea results from the Six-Party process and how the DPRK views NEAPSM.

Keeping China in the Game

16. (C) There is "a lot of concern" in China that a post-nuclear Korean Peninsula environment could develop without full Chinese participation, according to Wu Baiyi, Deputy Director of the China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies. While it is certainly possible that North Korea could lean towards China, South Korea or even the United States in the future, IWD's Bian said that China is not overly concerned about this scenario. Foremost, China wants a stable North Korea. A North Korea which is friendly to the United States is "not scary" to China, said Bian. China is a big country dealing with its own big country problems and the DPRK is a small country which likely will need to lean on a big power for support, Bian said.

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A Continued U.S. Role?

17. (C) According to China Academy of Social Science (CASS) scholar Jin Xide, when Chinese scholars and officials analyze China's relations with each of its Northeast Asian neighbors, they tend to examine each relationship in the broader context of overall Northeast Asia relations. On the other hand, Jin said, when scholars and officials contemplate the long-term future of Northeast Asia in general, the first relationship they consider is that between China and the United States. Chinese scholars, he explained, are generally of two schools of thought: either they view U.S. alliances in the region positively, or they see the U.S. presence as a reflection of antiquated "Cold War thinking." Saying he is of the former school, Jin believes the United States provides stability in the region and prevents Japan from having to remilitarize out of fear of Chinese military development. Jin said his informal survey of Chinese scholars indicates wide support for continued U.S. involvement in Northeast Asia.

18. (C) CICIR Professor Li said that China is "not worried" at all about the normalization of U.S.-DPRK ties. Otherwise, said Li, China would not have hosted the Six-Party Talks and supported efforts to improve U.S.-DPRK ties. China would like to see North Korea's economy and its relationships with the outside world improve, since the stability of the region is ultimately in China's national interest, he added.

United States -- The Spoiler?

19. (C) The NEAPSM concept is certainly appealing, said Beijing University Professor Zhu Feng. The security mechanism could help coordinate countries' competing interests including China's stability, the ROK's rapprochement with North Korea and Japan's abductee issue. However, establishing a NEAPSM is a "fantasy," Zhu contended. Although Secretary Rice has expressed support, President

Bush and the Department of Defense have not shown interest in NEAPSM. This indicates that it is not a priority for the U.S. Government, Zhu speculated. China should "forget" such a security mechanism because it will be unreliable, he stated. The status quo is too beneficial to the Department of Defense and NEAPSM will contradict current U.S. alliance politics and may undermine present U.S. military superiority, said Zhu.

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